

CITY OF ALAMO HEIGHTS
CITY COUNCIL
January 25, 2010

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Alamo Heights, Texas was held at the Council Chambers, 6120 Broadway, at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, January 25, 2010.

Present and composing a quorum were:

Mayor Louis Cooper
Mayor Pro-Tempore Susan Harwell
Councilmember Stan McCormick
Councilmember Bobby Rosenthal
Councilmember Jill Souter

Also attending were:

City Manager Ann Benson McGlone
Assistant City Manager/Public Works Director Shawn P. Eddy
City Attorney Mike Brenan
Communication/IT Manager Marian Ramirez
Finance Director Cynthia Barr
Community Development Director Brian Chandler
Human Resource Manager/Deputy City Secretary Judith E. Surratt
City Secretary Jennifer Reyna
Fire Chief Bill Hagendorf
Police Chief Rick Pruitt

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Mayor Louis Cooper called the meeting to order at 5: 37 p.m.

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Item # 1 **Recognition of J. W. Petrash, Community Resource Officer, on his retirement from the City of Alamo Heights after 20 years of public service, 19 years with the City of Alamo Heights**

Police Chief Rick Pruitt recognized Community Resource Officer J.W. Petrash on his retirement. Chief Pruitt presented him with a plaque in appreciation for his dedication and service.

The Councilmembers thanked Officer Petrash for the exceptional service he provided to the community and the leadership demonstrated in the D.A.R.E. program.

Margaret Houston, 140 Patterson Avenue, expressed that Mr. Petrash will be greatly missed.

Mr. Petrash thanked the citizens, City Council and City staff for the support during his tenure at the City of Alamo Heights.

Item # 2 **Recognition of Bill Kiel, former Councilmember Place 4**

Mayor Louis Cooper recognized former Councilmember Bill Kiel for his 3 years of public service. Mayor Cooper presented him with a plaque in appreciation for his contributions.

The Councilmembers thanked Mr. Kiel of his accessibility, dedication and commitment in serving the City of Alamo Heights.

Margaret Houston, 140 Patterson Avenue, thanked Mr. Kiel for his dedication as a public servant.

Mr. Kiel congratulated Officer Petrash on his retirement. He thanked the Mayor and City Council for the recognition. He also thanked City staff for the support and work they provided.

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Mayor Cooper announced a break at 6:09 p.m. to enjoy the cake for both honorees. The City Council meeting reconvened at 6:15 p.m.

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Mayor Cooper asked City Council for any corrections to the minutes of the January 11, 2010, City Council Meeting. A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Susan Harwell to approve the minutes of January 11, 2010. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Bobby Rosenthal and passed by unanimous vote.

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Item # 4 *City Manager's Report*

a. Update on community input to solicit interest in a Dog Park

Community Development Director Brian Chandler announced that the City is hosting a Design Workshop to gather community input for a proposed dog park. The workshop is scheduled for February 27th from 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. at the City Council Chambers. For more information please contact Mr. Chandler at (210) 832-2250 or via email, bchandler@alamoheightstx.gov.

b. Award from the San Antonio Section of the American Planning Association for the Comprehensive Plan

Community Development Director Brian Chandler announced that the Comprehensive Plan has been recognized by the San Antonio Section of the American Planning Association in the category of Comprehensive Plan. A ceremony will be held at the Tropicana Hotel on the Riverwalk on February 19th.

c. Designation of Alamo Heights to the Leadership Circle by the Texas Comptroller

Communication/IT Manager Marian Ramirez announced the City of Alamo Heights has been recognized with the Leadership Circle Award by the Texas Comptroller for financial transparency online.

City Council thanked Ms. Ramirez for the excellent display and maintenance on the City's website.

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Citizens To Be Heard Concerning Non-Agenda Items

Donald Starkweather, 225 Albany Street, stated he met with Community Development Director Brian Chandler and expressed concern about the alley drainage behind his property.

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Consent Item

Item # 6 Mayor Cooper read the following caption

Request for permission to refund a duplicate property tax payment to James R. and Diana K. Hartman, owners of property at 143 Montclair, in the amount \$760.07

A motion for approval was made by Councilmember Bobby Rosenthal. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jill Souter and passed by unanimous vote.

Public Hearing

Item # 7 Mayor Cooper read the following caption.

Public Hearing for comments on amendments to Chapter 5 of the Alamo Heights City Code of Ordinances titled Buildings and Building Regulations and to the Schedule of Development Fees

Community Development Director Brian Chandler made a PowerPoint presentation which included objectives, public input process timeline and proposed revisions.

Mr. Chandler summarized the significant changes to Chapter 5 that included not raising Food establishment fees and re-evaluating the fees during the budget process, requirement of an elevation measurement as part of the foundation survey process, tree mitigation, and City engineer, Freese and Nichols are reviewing the Stormwater Drainage Master Plan criteria.

Mr. Chandler stated the public input period has been extended to February 8, 2010 to allow additional time for public input. He stated that he is continuing to meet with business owners to collect and incorporate comments.

Councilmember Rosenthal asked clarification about how the changes would affect multi-family property owners and is February 8th a tentative date for council consideration. Mr. Chandler apologized for the lack of clarification in the summary of development fees and confirmed that multi-family tenants would not require a Certificate of Occupancy and confirmed that February 8th is a tentative date for council consideration.

Mayor Cooper opened the public hearing at 6:37 p.m.

George Geis, property owner in Alamo Heights, requested City Council to reconsider the adoption date of February 8, 2010 for the amendments to Chapter 5. Mr. Geis commented that his tenants have expressed difficulty in obtaining Certificates of Occupancy.

Cappy Lawton, 406 Harrison Avenue, also requested City Council to reconsider the adoption date for the amendments to Chapter 5 to allow him to review the information. He expressed the preference of receiving mail at his residence and requested a personal phone call in obtaining his input.

Bill Kiel, 124 Corona Avenue, expressed concern about whether repair and maintenance permits added value to a property. He stated that they should be considered as separate from general building permits. He asked about the permit submittal process to the Bexar Appraisal District.

City Manager Ann McGlone responded that the City will differentiate permits that are maintenance permits versus value permits and there will be a finalized process to identify the different types of permits. Councilmember McCormick commented on the need to differentiate a permit of value versus a maintenance permit.

Margaret Spencer, 140 Patterson Avenue, suggested including "user-friendly" in the development and preservation processes. Ms. Spencer asked about the definition of food establishment fee.

Mayor Cooper responded to Ms. Spencer that a food establishment fee is for food inspections to ensure businesses are meeting criteria for a safe and clean food establishment.

Mayor Cooper ended the public hearing at 6:55 p.m. and thanked the business owners for their feedback.

Mayor Pro Tem Harwell commented about the communication process to inform the business owners. She stated she informed a few citizens about the proposed changes and the summarized changes are available on the City's website and learned that no one has contacted Mr. Chandler, Community Development Director.

Items for Individual Consideration

Item # 8 Mayor Cooper read the following caption.

ORDINANCE NO. 1854

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 19 WATER AND SEWERS OF THE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES RELATED TO THE REPAIR OF SEWER LATERALS

Assistant City Manager/Public Works Director Shawn P. Eddy made a PowerPoint presentation that included background information and the current Alamo Heights Code of Ordinance. Staff recommended approval.

Mr. Eddy reviewed the current Chapter 19 Water and Sewers of the City Code of Ordinances. He recommended that the City of Alamo Heights accept limited liability for the repair of single-family and two-family residential sewer laterals outside of the customer's private property. Single-family and two-family residential owners are the only customers that will benefit and this process is a step to fully gather acceptance of liability of sewer laterals beyond the customer's property lines.

Mayor Cooper asked if commercial owners had problems with sewer laterals in the past 12 months. Mr. Eddy noted there has been a few commercial owners but majority are residential owners that have encountered the need for sewer lateral repairs.

Councilmember Souter asked if repairs are part of the current budget and if the budget is sufficient. Mr. Eddy responded that the current budget is sufficient to cover anticipated sewer lateral repairs. The City will conduct another rate study in 2012 in determine if further increases in sewer rates might be required to fund this liability in the future.

Patricia Evans, 140 Patterson Avenue, asked about the method of budgeting for sewer lateral repairs and asked if age of the sewer laterals contribute to the cost of repair.

Mr. Eddy explained the budget is based on an anticipated number of repairs and a typical sewer system has a lifetime of 40 years.

Councilmember Rosenthal stated this is a good opportunity for the City to absorb the costs for a residential property homeowner as an additional service to the citizens.

Mayor Cooper asked about the process of notifying the City for a sewer lateral repair. Mr. Eddy replied that the resident will continue to contact a plumber for evaluation. There will be coordination between the plumber and City staff and a process to follow.

Councilmember McCormick thanked City staff and the City Manager for their leadership in this project. He commented that repairing a sewer lateral is a good example of a maintenance repair permit to a new value permit that will make an impact to the resident's appraisal value.


A motion for approval was made by Mayor Pro Tem Harwell. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Souter. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

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There being no further business, a motion was made by Councilmember Souter to adjourn the meeting. A motion was seconded by Councilmember McCormick and passed by unanimous vote. Mayor Cooper adjourned the meeting at 7:18 p.m.



Louis Cooper
Mayor


Jennifer Reyna, TRMC
City Secretary